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1. Introduction

Communication is at the core of all our work at Horton Lodge School and is embedded within the Curriculum and the wider school day. It is fundamental to the lives and learning of pupils at Horton Lodge. The freedom to communicate is a basic equal opportunity human right. We recognise that the inability to communicate impacts adversely on social, emotional, cognitive, language development, and wellbeing. Developing communication skills is the responsibility of all staff and they should have the knowledge, skills, support and training to ensure that all pupils/students reach their communicative potential.

Effective communication incorporates body language, facial expression, gestures and tone of voice. It may also include more formal modes of alternative and augmentative communication (AAC). The Ace Centre Advisory Trust refer to AAC as any means by which an individual can supplement or replace spoken communication.

2. Aims

At Horton Lodge School we aim to:

- Be a 'total communication' environment, this means that we recognise and respond to all communicative attempts in whatever form (see Appendix 1)
- Ensure that every child is given every opportunity to work towards being an autonomous communicator. This involves being able to say whatever they want to say, to whoever they want to say it to and whenever they want to say it
- Ensure that adults around the child have the understanding and skills to support the child effectively.
- Immerse the pupils in an environment where their communication systems are used by adults across the day.
- Work closely with families and outside agencies

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Leadership Team:

- To ensure staff adhere to the Communication Policy
- To ensure that all staff have basic communication training in a range of communication strategies as part of their induction
- To monitor and support progression of pupil's communication skills
- To support staff to develop their knowledge and skills of communication strategies
- To have an oversight and understanding of the range of communication strategies used within school
- To identify funds for purchasing resources and equipment and for accessing relevant training

3.2 Subject / Area Leader

- Lucy Bloor is the area lead in Communication
- All Subject Leaders have responsibilities in the areas of: Knowing, supporting, monitoring and changing

3.3 School Support Staff:

- Develop pupils' communication skills across the day
- Ensure all pupils have access to individual communication systems at all times
- Have high expectations and standards and always assume competence in terms of the communication of each pupil
- Be a model as a communicator
- Record development and progress
- Provide meaningful contexts for each pupil to develop as a communicator
- Identify their own professional development needs
- Maintain close communication with home
- Keep communication aids in good working order and to report any losses or breakages promptly to SLT

4. Developing Communication across the school

The approaches used to support communication are individualised to each pupil's communication needs. Below are some of the approaches that may be used within the School. These are just some of the approaches that may be used and should not be viewed as an exhaustive list:

- Time Tables: Some classes and pupils within school will have a visual timetable and now and next boards. The use of visual planning supports difficulties with respective language and increases independence.
- Communication Aids: there are a number of different communication aids used by pupils/students within school. These include low tech options such as communication books up to high tech aids such as eye gaze systems.
- PODD – Pragmatic Organised Dynamic Display - A way of organising vocabulary for communication at any time. PODD uses Boardmaker PCS colour symbols, The intervention used with PODD is aided language stimulation. This is a strategy by which adults or communication partners use the system to speak to the individual, (pointing and saying the symbol label) to teach them what they could say, when to say it and who to say it to. In PODD communication books and page sets for high tech systems (windows and iOS) vocabulary is organised according to communication function and conversational discourse requirements.
- Additional Language Display (ALD) communication boards are used to support specific activities.
- Objects of reference. This is a communication support system whereby particular objects associated with particular activities are used to communicate an activity that is about to take place. Items are selected that are meaningful to the pupil.
- Sensory cues (e.g. daily aroma, physical touch, personal identifiers).
- Makaton: Makaton is a form on sign supported English. It is used alongside speech and can support understanding of spoken language as well as being used by pupils as a form expressive language.

5. Assessment

Communication and interaction is a domain on the SEND Code of Practice. Progress in communication is monitored through tagging evidence on Evidence for Learning. Where a child has Outcomes for Communication and Interaction on their EHCP this outcome along with short term IEP targets are assessed using the MAPP Continuing Skills Progression.

6. Monitoring arrangements

- The Communication policy is presented to the Governing Body.
- A subject leader report for communication is presented to governors annually



- It will also be reviewed within the two year cycle or earlier if required.

7. Links with other policies

This Communication Policy is linked to our:

- The EYFS policy
- English Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Assessment Policy

Communication Bill of Rights

I have the right:

<p>to be given real choices</p>	<p>to say no, refuse and reject choices</p>	<p>to ask for what I want</p>	<p>to share my feelings</p>	<p>to be heard and responded to even if the answer is no</p>
<p>to ask for and get attention and interaction</p>	<p>I have the right:</p>			<p>to have and use my speech systems all the time</p>
<p>ask and know about my schedule and world</p>				<p>to be taught how to communicate</p>
<p>to have my speech system in working order and to have a back up</p>	<p>to be a full and equal member of my community</p>	<p>to be treated with respect and dignity</p>	<p>to be spoken with, not about</p>	<p>to be communicated with in a sensitive manner</p>

From the National Joint Committee for the Communicative Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities. (1992). Guidelines for meeting the communication needs of persons with severe disabilities. *Assistive Technology*, 7(1), 2-3. adapted by K. Adam, MS&A